

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS

BCR&P

ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2006

BELIEVE
IN A GREENER BALTIMORE



BELIEVE
IN A FUN AND FIT BALTIMORE

Mission Statement:

To enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Baltimore by providing diverse recreational, environmental, cultural, educational and leisure opportunities to benefit current and future generations.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Over the last several years, Baltimore has become an attractive and affordable place for many people to call home. There are several factors that can be attributed to Baltimore's growth in population including a booming housing market, attractive commercial development and an increase in business opportunities.

But Baltimore's belief in a greener, fun and fit city is one of the most significant lures to young families. City agencies like the Department of Recreation and Parks have been instrumental in making Baltimore a more attractive and healthier place to live.



In 2005, we were voted the "fittest city" in America. There were many who had doubts about our top ranking. But evidence of our commitment to fitness can be observed everyday on the Gwynns Falls Trail's biking or Druid Hill Park's jogging paths.

We also celebrated the "100th Playground" milestone. To date, we have completed 113 safer "newly renovated" playgrounds across the city. We also became the first major city in Maryland to set an urban tree canopy goal, which will ultimately improve our air and water quality; fight the atmospheric greenhouse effect; and offset energy costs.

Congratulations Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks! Your efforts have played an instrumental role in making Baltimore a great place to call home. Special thanks to all the partners, donors and volunteers for their contributions and continued support.

Martin O'Malley
Mayor

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



On behalf of the entire Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks' team, it is my honor to present the 2006 Annual Report.

Last year was a very exciting year for staff, partners, volunteers and our many supporters. By working together, we were able to provide the citizens of Baltimore with outstanding leisure activities, special events as well as well-maintained parks and open spaces.

In FY 2006, our goal was simple: to be more responsive, accountable and cost effective. Along the way, we became more aggressive. We began to think of the many services that we offer as much more than a vehicle for recreation.

Our new vision was to offer the "total" leisure experience. This included a strategic marketing campaign designed to build BCRP into a powerful leader in the fun and fitness market. The first step was to develop more division-wide physical activities for the entire family.

We are proud to report that our Youth and Adults Sports Division was recognized by Mayor Martin O'Malley for its contributions to keeping Baltimoreans "fit." For the fifth consecutive year, our Senior Citizens Division hosted Senior Health and Fitness Day, which averages over 500 seniors annually. Our Therapeutic Division hosted the first Extreme and Adaptive Sports Expo (EASE). The Recreation Bureau increased its teen population by developing more innovative programs.

Another highlight was BCRP's first newsletter, which was distributed to 50,000 households across the city of Baltimore. Baltimore's Leisurely Times was produced by the Marketing and Media Relations Department as an insert in the Baltimore Sun. It provides readers with information on how to maintain a healthy lifestyle by participating in both traditional and non-traditional activities.

While many of our events and programs are free - and will continue to be free to the public - we also developed new ways to generate revenue. Instead of contracting vendors to sell food, photos, and arts and crafts, we used our in-house talent to offer the same services for less.


In the end, it proved to be a successful strategy. Thanks to a very special group of stakeholders, we were able to exceed our goal for FY 2006.

BCRP exists solely to serve the citizens of Baltimore. Thanks for continuing to Believe in both a Greener and a Fun and Fit Baltimore.

Connie A. Brown

BELIEVE IN...

A GREENER BALTIMORE



In FY 2007, Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks will continue developing an entrepreneurial spirit. Currently, we are working on a Master Concessions Plan to better organize and expand our self-sustaining capability.

Cylburn Arboretum will get some much-needed upgrades thanks to a \$1 million challenge gift from an anonymous donor made on behalf of the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland and the Horticultural Society of Maryland. The gift is the largest single pledge ever made to Cylburn. Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks will match the gift with FY 2007 funds on July 1, 2006.

As identified in the 2004 Cylburn Master Plan, the funds will be used to build a new visitor's center. The center will contain a meeting hall with a 250-person capacity. The hall will include three small rooms to accommodate concurrent functions. Other amenities will include a gift shop, snack bar and restrooms. A joint project among the donor groups and Baltimore Department of Recreation and Parks, the building will be approximately 11,000 square feet.

The center will also house the administrative office of the Federated Garden Clubs. Plans include an environmentally sensitive, well-landscaped parking lot, which will be less obtrusive than the current parking area. The estimated cost of the project is over \$2 million.

A FUN AND FIT BALTIMORE



The Bureau of Recreation hosted the 2006 Recreation Explosion: an entertainment, fun and fitness expo in April. It was two fun-filled days of live jazz, carnival rides, a parade, sports and more! Another highlight at the explosion was the "BATTLE OF THE CITY ALL-STARS," where citizens competed against members of the Baltimore City Council in chess, checkers or basketball. Over 2, 500 citizens attended the 2006 Recreation Explosion.

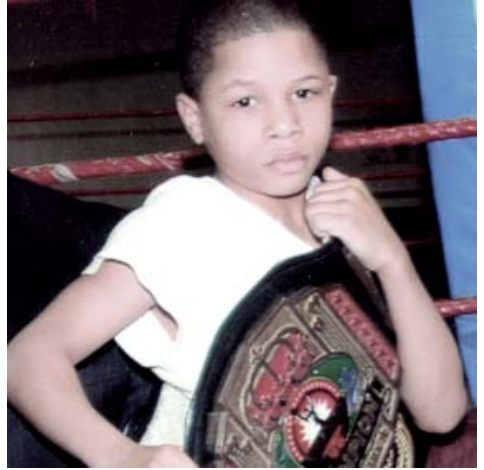
In FY 2007, the Bureau of Recreation will offer the Lunch and Leisure series every other Wednesday during the summer months at the "newly" constructed War Memorial Plaza. The series will be FREE and open to the public at noon.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Bureau of Recreation

Portia E. Harris,
Associate Director



LEISURE SERVICES

Cecilia Alexander,
Acting Leisure Services Manager

Traditionally, the Leisure Services Division has served children ages 5-13 at the 46 recreation centers across the city of Baltimore. In FY 2006, this division began working aggressively to increase its programming to attract young people between the ages of 13-17.

The division has designated three sites for Teen Build After-School Programs: Cahill, James McHenry and Oliver recreation centers. Studies show that in communities with comprehensive after-school programs, young people are less likely to commit crimes or engage in high-risk behavior such as drugs and alcohol use. These after-school programs each provide a unique focus with a collective emphasis on entrepreneurship and life skills. As part of the program, teens are encouraged to create and vote on programs offered.

In addition, Leisure Services has developed the Teen Initiative Committee. This committee is a vociferous group of teens from diverse centers collectively working as the teen voice in programming and policy decisions within the Leisure Services Division. The Teens with Initiative combines attentive adult supervision, quality after-school activities and youth involvement.

SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE

Stella Clanton,
Coordinator

The Division of School-Age Child Care had a great year and continues to make great strides in the licensed child-care program. The uniqueness of this program allows working parents to feel secure that their children are in the best possible care. In FY 2006, both the Northwood and Waverly sites served a total of 670 children. Each site has an active and supportive parent group that helps with program planning and implementation.



YOUTH AND ADULTS SPORTS

Robert Wall,
Division Chief

With 104 softball, 15 basketball, 27 outdoor soccer, seven floor hockey and 42 broomball adult teams, the Youth and Adults Sports Division has played a significant role in helping the citizens of Baltimore maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. The goal was to increase the physical activity of the adult co-ed population by adding more programming sports. In FY 2006, this division was recognized by Mayor Martin O'Malley for its contributions to keeping Baltimoreans "fit."

In youth sports, the baseball and football programs have seen an increase in participation. With the addition of the fall baseball and flag football leagues, there are more opportunities for youth to stay active. In addition, the Youth and Adults Sports Division has celebrated a string of wins, tournaments and championship games from the youth teams. Baltimore's AAABA 20 and under Baseball, the Baltimore City Track and Field Club, the Baltimore City All-star Tennis Academy, the AAU Basketball and the Fast Pitch Softball 16 and under teams all competed in national competitions last summer.

Two national champions also reign from the Boxing Program at Upton Boxing Facility. The 2006 National Silver Gloves winner is 11-year-old Gervonta "Tank" Davis and the 2006 Golden Gloves Regional Champion is 18-year-old Angelo Ward.

At the Dominic "Mimi" DiPietro Family Skating Center media coverage, participation in special events and enrollment in the ice-skating lessons have all increased over 50 percent. When the season ended, the Floor hockey participants kept the Ice Rink very active.

Overall, this year marked an exciting and productive year in this division. In FY 2007, the Youth and Adult Sports Division's goals includes: increasing participation in youth and adult basketball; building an elite boxing program with the opening of the "newly" renovated Upton Boxing Facility; diving into the Summer Swim season with the opening of the "newly" renovated Patterson Park Pool; and increasing participation in the new Fishing programs, which was made possible through a National Recreation and Parks' Association grant.





SENIOR CITIZENS DIVISION

Jo Ann Cason,
Coordinator

With 94 golden-age clubs conveniently located throughout the city of Baltimore and a host of innovative programs, the Senior Citizens Division continues to be one of the most active divisions within the department.

In FY 2006, over 900 seniors committed to walking approximately 335 miles over a seven-month period. Each participant walked an estimated 12 miles per week— with pedometers in hand—to achieve their goal. In October, they were recognized for their commitment to fitness during the 2005 annual Senior Health and Fitness Day celebration. This event, which is always very successful averaging 500-700 seniors each year, also includes health screenings and information from various health care providers.

In addition to health, the Senior Citizens Division places an equal emphasis on “fun”. One of the most popular “Summer Pastimes” is the annual Indoor Picnic. Last year, over 2, 300 seniors traveled to Kurtz’s Beach for eight days of adventure, which included strolling around scenic grounds, shaking a leg to musical entertainment and enjoying steamed crabs.

There’s also the annual Senior Pageant, which is truly a fun-filled evening of elegance and grace. Last year, 12 ladies performed for over 300 friends and family members. The participants were judged on walking, public speaking and talent. The winner was Bessie Johnson who’s energetic tap dance stole the show. In December, the division worked with Baltimore County’s Office on Aging for the first Senior Maryland American Idol Contest. This event was held at the Chesapeake Theatre in Brooklyn Park. Baltimore’s own Joyce Tuck won first place in the competition with her wonderful rendition of “Over the Rainbow.”



THERAPEUTIC RECREATION DIVISION

Mike Naugle,
Program Coordinator

Recreation is for everyone! Aggressive sports like skateboarding, basketball or softball: nothing is off-limits for Baltimore’s disabled community.

In FY 2006, the Therapeutic Division hosted the first Extreme and Adaptive Sports Expo (EASE). Co-sponsored by Maryland’s Office of Disabilities, this event included recreational activities for citizens of all ages and abilities.

The nationally recognized group, the Amped Riders Association, displayed their outstanding skateboarding skills at the event. There were also demonstrations by Disability Awareness’ players, Paralympian Gold Medal winner Coach Larry Hughes, Carroll County’s Therapeutic Horseback Riding Association, the Special Olympics, Maryland, the Maryland Ravens Disabilities Awareness Program and the League of Dreams, Inc.

Another first for this division in FY 2006 was the Variety Children’s Theatre Project. This program provided kids with disabilities an opportunity to connect with non-disabled children. The purpose of the program is to teach acting concepts to children ages 7 to 18. Because it is an inclusion program, a secondary goal is to provide a recreational venue where children with disabilities and non-disabled children can work together toward the common goal of putting on a theatrical production.

By adding a dance component to this program, the division was able to double its number of participants from 11 to 23. The diversity of the group in terms of disability, race and economical backgrounds makes this a model program. After being recommended to the World Trade Center Institute, a delegation of educators from Hungary came to Baltimore to observe the production through the International Visitor Leadership Program.

Because of its innovative programming, Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks’ Therapeutic Division was awarded the 2005-2006 “Innovative Program Award” at the Maryland Recreation and Parks Association’s Annual Conference.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Bureau of Parks

Tom Jeannetta,
Acting Chief of Parks



FORESTRY DIVISION

Rebecca Feldberg,
City Arborist

In FY 2006, Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks hired the first city arborist in nearly a decade. Rebecca Feldberg comes to the department with a love of trees as well as expert knowledge in sustainability.

Baltimore City's Recreation and Parks and Planning departments have been working with Maryland's Department of Natural Resources Forest Service to study the tree canopy. According to Satellite data, 19.8 percent of Baltimore's land is currently covered by tree canopy. The city's goal is to reach 39.6 percent within the next 30 years.

In FY 2007, the Forestry Division will continue its effort to double the city's tree canopy. Baltimore has been awarded \$83, 000 in National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration funds to write an Urban Forestry Management Plan: Tree Baltimore. The expected release date of Tree Baltimore is March 31, 2007.

In addition, the Forestry Division will develop and implement a seven-year tree pruning cycle for street trees, which includes hiring a forestry specialist to coordinate the program.

HORTICULTURAL DIVISION

William Vondrasek,
Chief Horticulturist

While driving through the streets of Baltimore, citizens can view a dazzling sea of color along the city's entryways and medians thanks to the Horticultural Division. A city initiative to add a little color and life to Baltimore, this division planted an array of eye-catching red tulips in the median of Edmondson Avenue.

There's also a one-mile stretch of stunning perennials on the six-foot-wide Baltimore-Washington Parkway's median, which extends from the city line to Waterview Avenue. The median was once filled with stone.

In FY 2006, the Department of Transportation replaced the stone with soil and the Horticulture Division's field crews installed the plantings and an irrigation system.

CYLBURN MANSION AND ARBORETUM

Melissa Grim,
Greenhouse Supervisor

Maybe it's the rich history, the picturesque views, the brilliant foliage or the beautiful blooms at Cylburn that has captured the hearts of its many visitors and garnered many supporters. In FY 2007, Cylburn will get some additional upgrades thanks to a second gift of \$48,204.50. A memorial in honor of the late Muriel Klarman, the funds will be used to construct new pathways around the Arboretum. It's also the perfect companion to the \$1 million challenge gift to build a new visitor's center.

CARRIE MURRAY NATURE CENTER

Corinne Parks,
Director

We are promoting our special facilities as "first class" tourist attractions. Over the last year, the Carrie Murray Nature Center has experienced a boost in media coverage.

The center was featured in the Baltimore Sun as an alternative to the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. It was also featured on FOX 5 - WTTG Washington's morning show as the premier rehabilitation home for injured and orphaned wildlife. As a result, there has been a 30 percent increase in participation for the center's special events and tours.

In FY 2007, the Carrie Murray Nature Center will offer bay studies and gardening classes in the new greenhouse. A \$3,000 donation from the parents of two former campers and counselors, the greenhouse is a memorial to their sons who were lost in a car accident. It's also an excellent addition to the 1,216 acres of woods surrounding the center.

THE HOWARD PETERS RAWLINGS CONSERVATORY AND BOTANIC GARDENS OF BALTIMORE

Kate Blom,
Conservatory Supervisor

The Holiday Poinsettia Show added some extra cheer and color to the holiday season in FY 2006. Over 15 cultivated varieties and over 1000 plants were on display at the Howard Peters Rawlings Conservatory and Botanic Gardens of Baltimore.

In December, the Conservatory also unveiled its Botanical Gift Shop, which offers a variety of plants for sale. During the period of Dec. 17, 2005 through April 30, 2006, plant sales from the shop have accounted for \$2, 696 in revenue for the Conservatory.

The annual displays continue to be the most successful events. Guided tours and walk-ins doubled during the Fall Chrysanthemum, the Holiday and the Spring Flower Show displays. In addition, this facility has provided the ambiance for 20 weddings. And over 50 different organizations paid for guided tours of the Conservatory in FY 2006.

In March 2006, the Presidents of all of the District IV Garden Clubs held their annual meeting at the Conservatory and presented the division with a check for \$2,500. The money was used to plant trees along Auchentoroly Terrace.





The Maryland Landscape Nursery Association, in conjunction with the Maryland Greenhouse Growers Association and the University of Maryland, will host their annual Chesapeake Interiorscape Conference at the Conservatory in FY 2007. The keynote speaker will be Holly Shimizu, the Executive Director of the U.S. Botanic Garden. Over 100 professional horticulturists are expected to attend this event.

PARK CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Park Conservation and Community Outreach Office coordinates tree planting and environmental enhancement or restoration projects in the city of Baltimore. This office is responsible for reviewing plans and providing construction oversight for all contracts that impact parkland and are not initiated by the Capital Developments Division. In FY 2006, this office reviewed 31 contracts including plans for five bridge restorations, 13 wastewater projects, seven mitigation projects and six utility contracts.

Sold out! The new Neighborhood Tree Steward program helps the citizens of Baltimore learn to love their neighborhood street and park trees. Upon completion of the class, participants are certified to prune, maintain and plant trees in their neighborhoods.



OFFICE OF PARTNERSHIPS

Jennifer Morgan,
Director

The Office of Partnerships promotes public and private partnerships that improve the quality of Baltimore's parklands by encouraging stewardship. These partnerships help to create, restore and improve parks, greenways and trails. They also help to create healthier communities throughout the city of Baltimore.

The Office of Partnerships has established nearly 40 partners who annually contribute over 30,000 volunteer hours to the city of Baltimore that is valued at approximately \$900,000. Working closely with Park Conservation and Community Outreach, the primary focus of this office has been to build and organize community groups. In FY 2006, Timberland's Community Builder's Tour and Starbucks' Earth Day became the blueprint for other corporate entities who are interested in social and environmental responsibility.

In FY 2007, the Office of Partnerships will increase its relationship and joint ventures with Baltimore's business community as well as neighborhood groups. Through "BELIEVE in a Greener Baltimore" and Baltimore City's Volunteer Park Service Program, the office will also continue to organize events that encourage environmental awareness in the city's great park system.

The 5TH ANNUAL BALTIMORE CITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

Every year, Baltimore golfers come out to Pine Ridge Golf Course to celebrate the beginning of summer. Located on the Loch Raven Reservoir, this well-maintained golf course attracts sportsman looking for a refreshing escape from the urban landscape. Through the annual golf tournaments, the site also has been a successful fundraiser for the volunteer park service program's purchase of tools and materials for park maintenance.

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENTS DIVISION

Gennady Schwartz,
Chief

The most celebrated green space in Baltimore during FY 2006 was the War Memorial Plaza. A magnificent complement to City Hall and the War Memorial Building, the rectangular shaped park - with over an acre of beautiful green grass, decorative stone, lights and a fountain - became one of Capital Developments' most recognized projects of the year.

Designed and constructed for \$1.5 million, the Plaza was completed by this division on schedule and within budget. The "newly" renovated park was originally constructed in 1927 as a memorial to the 1,769 Marylanders who died in War World I. In November 2005, the Plaza also became a memorial to six fallen soldiers who died in Iraq. The citizens of Baltimore joined Mayor O'Malley, BCRP's Director Connie A. Brown, military officials, veterans, friends and family to honor their memories on Veterans Day.



ANNUAL REPORT

In recognition of BCRP Stakeholders

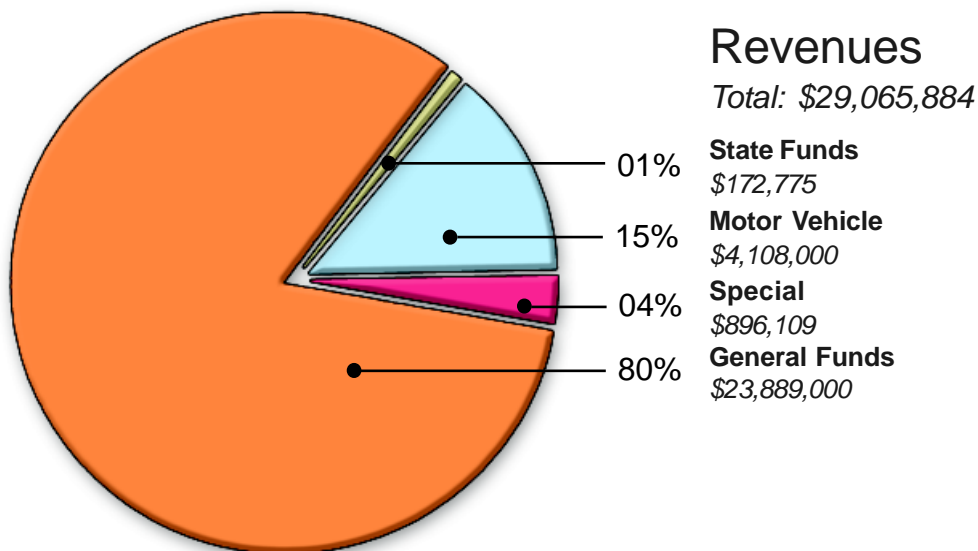
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Special thanks to Jay Baker, Travis Barnes, Charles Croxton, Jennifer Morgan, Mike Naugle, Corrine Parks and other contributors of this annual report's photography.



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Recreation & Parks



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